



HOW TO... Display Excel's calendar

Stephen Wells shows you how to create a calendar to make date entry faster and easier in Excel

Here's how to create a keyboard short cut that makes an interactive calendar appear on an Excel worksheet. You can then click on any cell in the worksheet, choose a year, month and day on the calendar, and that date instantly appears in your chosen cell. This works in any Windows version of Excel since Excel 97.

1 In this tutorial we'll create a macro. Macros are mini programs within Office or other documents. As we want our macro to be available for all Excel documents, we need to store it in a file called PERSONAL.XLS. If you haven't used macros before, you need to create this file. Open a new Excel workbook and click Tools, Macro, Record new macro. Type Dummy into the Macro name box and pick Personal Macro Workbook from the list. Click OK, select a cell on the worksheet and click the Stop (square) button. Close Excel and click Yes when asked if you want to save changes to the Personal Macro Workbook.

2 Open a new workbook and press Alt-F11 to start the VBA editor. Select VBAProject (PERSONAL.XLS) from the list on the left, click the Insert menu and select UserForm. A blank form and a toolbox should open. If there's no toolbox, choose Toolbox on the View menu. Right-click a space in the toolbox and choose Additional Controls. Scroll to Calendar Control and select it. This adds it to the toolbox. If Calendar Control isn't in the list, you'll have to install it manually. Find out how at www.fontstuff.com/mailbag/qvba01.htm.

Click the Calendar tool and draw a rectangle on the form to create the calendar. If a message

appears saying the calendar isn't registered, click the Tools menu and select References. Click Browse and under Files of Type: choose ActiveX Controls (*.ocx). Find the Windows/System 32 folder in newer versions of Excel or Windows/System in Excel 97 and select MSCAL.OCX to register it.

3 Use the size handles to enlarge the form and calendar until you can see all its features. Right-click in the form but outside the calendar and choose Properties. In the UserForm Properties box at the bottom-left, change Caption from UserForm1 to Choose a date.

4 Press F7 on your keyboard to show the code for UserForm1. Replace the code that appears with the following:

```
Private Sub Calendar1_Click()  
    ActiveCell=Calendar1.Value  
End Sub  
  
Private Sub UserForm_Activate()  
    Me.Calendar1.Value = Date  
End Sub
```

The first macro tells Excel to enter Calendar1's value into the active cell when you click on the calendar. The second sets the calendar to today's date. You must also tell Excel to show the calendar, so click the Insert menu, select Module and enter:

```
Sub ShowCalendar()  
    UserForm1.Show  
End Sub
```

Click the File menu and select Close and Return to Microsoft Excel.

5 Back on the worksheet, you can now create the keyboard short cut to display the calendar. Click Tools, Macro, Macros and select the ShowCalendar macro. Click the Options button and enter a short cut. We recommend Ctrl-Shift-C. Click OK, then the Close button at the top-right of the Macro dialog box.

Click any cell in your worksheet and type Ctrl-Shift-C to display the calendar. Choose a year and month from the drop-down menus, click on a day, and the cell will display the chosen date. Close the calendar by clicking its top-right button.

6 To customise your calendar further, click Tools, Macro, Visual Basic Editor. Close any open windows, and in the Project Explorer menu on the left double-click UserForm1. This will display the form and calendar. Right-click on the calendar and choose Properties. You'll see a list of the calendar's properties on the left of the screen.

By default, the weeks on the calendar run from Sunday to Saturday. Under the Alphabetic tab, go to FirstDay and change the setting from Sun to Mon to rearrange the weeks to start from Monday. You can also change the month format by scrolling down to MonthLength, clicking the down arrow and choosing English. On the calendar, Jan will become January and so on.

Type Alt-Q to close the VBA editor, then close Excel. You can click No to saving the workbook, but choose Yes when asked if you want to save changes to the Personal Macro Workbook.

